

From your executive

Chairman's report

It is late spring – *very* late spring – as I write this report, and my feeling is that I should not be wearing a woolly jumper in June! However, we still have the weeks of summer ahead of us, and I can only hope that the woolly jumpers will disappear for a while!

As you receive this edition of the *Journal*, we should have just had our 2008 Conference in Birmingham, which marks, of course, ACPWH's Sixtieth Anniversary – notwithstanding a few changes of our Association's name throughout this period. The conference organizing committee, with the support of both Ann Mayne and Fitwise Management Ltd, has been working hard for the past 18 months to put together an interesting and varied programme. I do hope that many of you will have been able to attend, in spite of the continuing difficulties with funding that face all of us. We do our best to persuade our managers that conference is integral to our continuing professional development – and sometimes we manage to do this successfully; I hope that this will be one such occasion!

In case you missed it in *Frontline*, I am delighted to report that our motion to the 2008 Annual Representatives' Conference (ARC) was accepted. The proposal stated: 'This Conference calls upon the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) to work with the Royal College of Midwives and the Department of Health to develop a strategy to address the impact of the cuts in maternity services throughout the UK on physiotherapy services.' Our thanks go to Ann Mayne, Michelle Horridge and Shirley Bustard, who attended ARC as representatives of our Association.

The executive committee, together with the education (ESC) and *Journal* subcommittees, has continued to work hard throughout this year in many different areas. In order to ensure that our website is of the highest quality, it needs constantly to be monitored in order to update, amend and disseminate information appropriately. Another of its key roles is to provide a forum for discussion. We are grateful to Gail Stephens, who has taken on this monitoring

task; we hope that you will continue to visit the site and feed back your comments to us. Helen Forth has relinquished the post of diversity officer because of personal circumstances, but we hope to welcome her back to the committee at some point in the future. Ann Johnson is also stepping down as public relations officer. We would like to thank both of them for their hard work and support over the months. Becky Aston has moved, temporarily, to the other side of the world: her husband, Will, has been awarded a fellowship in orthopaedic oncology in Sydney. The family will return in the summer of 2009, and we wish them a wonderful year in Australia. We are very grateful to Becky for agreeing to continue as research officer during her year's absence. This would have been impossible 10 years ago, but we are delighted that ease of communication enables us to hold on to her during her travels!

We have continued to benefit greatly from our association with Fitwise. Administratively, the executive committee simply could not manage the increasing workload without the expertise of Blair King and his team. I also know that the conference organizing committee is grateful for the experience which Fitwise brings; they have now been involved with this aspect for the past 4 years. Anyone who has organized a conference will know just how much work is required!

Those of you who were at our conference last year will remember that the discussion groups had to be curtailed in order to accommodate the Annual General Meeting (AGM) at an appropriate time during the weekend. However, we did receive some feedback and comments, and are grateful to those members who responded. The executive committee's response to the questions is included in this issue of the *Journal* (see pp. 78–79).

I am pleased to say that one applicant, Becky Aston, has applied successfully for funding from the Dame Josephine Barnes Bursary to help towards the cost of her Professional Doctorate in Physiotherapy, which she commenced in September 2007 at the University of Brighton; we wish Becky all the best for this study. The bursary is awarded to enable members to further their education in women's health by completing

postgraduate study or participating in research. Information on how to apply for funding from the bursary can be found on pp. 104–105 of the *Journal* and on the website.

The committee is very conscious of keeping down costs as much as we are able, and one way in which we can do this is by greater use of e-mail communication to members, rather than postal mailings. These have become significantly more costly recently. Most members have an e-mail address (for work, home or both), and the committee has agreed that, from January 2009, unless you request otherwise, communication will be by e-mail. If you haven't done so already, please could you let Fitwise have your e-mail address for the membership database. If you don't wish to receive communications in this way, or are unable to, please could you inform Fitwise in writing. Our working in this way will result in significant savings for ACPWH, which will benefit all of us.

Finally, I should like to thank *everyone* who contributes, in whatever capacity, to the work of our Association: to all members of the executive committee, the ESC and the *Journal* subcommittee; and to the many others who have ongoing responsibilities and those who respond to requests for specific tasks. We simply could not function without you.

I hope that you have all had a good summer and are feeling refreshed – and I look forward to seeing you in Birmingham. Sixty years of ACPWH is certainly something to celebrate, and I am optimistic that the Association will go from strength to strength in the coming decades.

Pauline Walsh

Treasurer's report

I am pleased to report that subscriptions have been coming in as usual, and we would like to thank you for your patience during the transition between the increase in subscriptions and setting up a Direct Debit system. If the latter was in place, it would make such alterations so much easier!

As an executive, we are aware that we need to be both cost-effective and continue to develop as a clinical interest group (CIG). It is for this reason that we have started to undertake a more proactive strategy with financial planning. This will initially involve a tendering process for our main areas of expenditure and a review of all other areas. It is then planned that this will take place every 3–5 years.

This process will be somewhat time-consuming, but it is hoped that we can complete the first tranche within a year.

Doreen McClurg

Fitwise Management Ltd report

Financial report

The most significant change in the management of ACPWH business over the past year must be the financial administration of the Association. The use of professional bookkeeping services has resulted in a much more analytical reporting of financial data, which allows the executive committee to manage the finances of the Association in a more efficient and cost-effective manner. This allows for a clear monthly breakdown of income and expenditure for each area of activity (departments), highlighting areas where closer examination of costs may be required and potential savings made, as well as identifying areas where there is successful income generation.

One aspect of the financial situation still has to be addressed. Currently, sums of money are held in either local ACPWH bank accounts around the country or in individual's personal bank accounts on behalf of the Association (these may be branch accounts, course accounts or something similar). Even though ACPWH has the legal status of an unincorporated association (i.e. it is not a limited company), it is nevertheless regulated under the Companies Act, and must annually declare all of its income and expenditure for annual auditing purposes. Furthermore, it must also report the balances in all other accounts every year. This requires all money held, by any member or branch, to be reported to the Association bookkeeper with details of the bank address, account number and balance. It should be noted that this is required for reporting purposes only, but there is a legal obligation placed on the executive committee to report it within the annual statement of accounts. A flyer requesting this information will be sent to every member of the Association with the next mailing to members, but anyone can report this information to <Sandra@fitwise.co.uk> at any time. It is important to understand that, although any such balances held are legally ACPWH assets, it is not the intention of the executive committee to involve itself in local income and expense activity. However, formal knowledge of the accounts is an absolute necessity.

Table 1. Breakdown of ACPWH leaflet sales and expenditure

Income/expenditure	Amount
Invoiced out	£2228.31
Costs:	
Ralph Allen Press	£567.50
postage	£461.52
stationery/time	£444.53
Total cost	£1473.55
Profit	£754.76

Book and leaflet sales

Leaflet sales via Fitwise to the end of the ACPWH financial year on 31 March 2008 are detailed in Table 1.

The supply process is running smoothly and we have provided the Association's auditors, Merchant & Co., with the stock levels at the financial year's end. We have only included Fitwise stock held.

With effect from 1 April 2008, all leaflet sales and purchases are now operated through the ACPWH Sage bookkeeping system in keeping with all other ACPWH financial activity, and the previous system of recording leaflet costs and sales by spreadsheet has been discontinued.

Membership

Membership numbers remain stable with fluctuations over the past 16 months of between 777 members (May 2007) and 718 members (August 2007). Membership numbers for 2008 have fluctuated only by 3.5% over the first 4 months of 2008 between 737 and 763.

Fitwise contact with the membership of the Association is mainly through the management of the membership database and the distribution of leaflets. As a result of the increase in membership subscriptions approved at the 2007 AGM, there are now plans to change the way in which future membership subscriptions are collected. In the past, banker's orders have been used routinely to collect money, but the change in the subscription amount for 2008 has meant that many members have paid part of their subscriptions for the current year by banker's order and the balance by cheque. Some issues surrounding this method of payment still exist, in that, at the time of writing, some 34 standing order payments have been made into the ACPWH bank account that cannot be allocated as payments made by members. This is a result of insufficient information being provided by the bank(s) responsible for making the payment.

All members with standing orders have been asked to cancel these with immediate effect, and if any member has not yet done this, our advice would be to cancel it immediately. The ACPWH cannot be responsible for cancelling a banker's order, which can only be cancelled by the individual member. From experience with other databases, I can identify standing order payments that have gone into other Association bank accounts for the past 5 years with the Association having no knowledge of to what the payments relate. So don't be a victim – cancel now!

It is the intention of ACPWH to move to a direct debit (DD) method of payment once the appropriate arrangements can be made with the Association's bank. Direct debits have the advantage of allowing the amount collected to be changed, if need be, in a situation where the subscription increases in future, and these eliminate the need for the member to complete any form other than the original DD mandate. The money is *collected* from the bank by the company managing the database rather than *paid* by the member's bank, and this method of operation has significant advantages in terms of saving administration costs. A flyer explaining future action on the introduction of a DD system will be sent to all members either by e-mail or hard copy once it is operational.

Conference 2007

The final financial position regarding the ACPWH Annual Conference and Exhibition 2007 shows an income of £24 598.32 and expenses of £21 054.53, leaving a profit margin of £3543.77.

Conference 2008

The Conference 2008 application form has been e-mailed to members and a hard copy has been sent out with the *Journal*. We have received 15 conference delegate applications so far and have three exhibitors booked to date. This compares with 10 applications at the same time last year. The 2008 delegate package, unlike the 2007 package, allows delegates to choose either a full package, including accommodation, or simply the delegate registration package that gives the option of making personal accommodation arrangements.

All speakers have confirmed. We have requested that they complete the various forms regarding their individual requirements for accommodation and audiovisual equipment, as

well as their biographies, abstracts and permission to print their presentations. They are also supplied with an expenses claim form.

Conference 2009

A contract for the next year's conference at the Bournemouth Marriott Hotel has now been completed. The local organizing committee has opted to apply the 2007 template for delegate registration, with accommodation being provided as a completely separate package. There was some concern about the costs of delegate registration for 2009 (at £245.00 for the early-bird package), and this led to the view that delegates should have the option of choosing the conference hotel or alternative, cheaper accommodation based on personal preference.

A reserve booking of 70 rooms for delegates wanting to stay at the conference hotel has been agreed with the Bournemouth Marriott and this reserved booking will be held until 6 weeks prior to the event. The decision not to contract for a block booking was taken on the principle that, once contracted for, the rooms must be paid for, unlike a reserve booking. The other disadvantage of a block booking of rooms is that delegates could independently make a private reservation at the hotel at a price lower than the block booking price and it was felt that this option should also be available to delegates. It is always the case that a block booking will be more expensive than an individual booking, especially if booked using the website, illogical though this may seem. The reserved room price for single occupancy is £119.00, including bed and breakfast (£129.00 for double occupancy).

Blair King

Public relations officer's report

Since my last report, I have been contacted directly by the CSP, who asked me to speak to journalists who wanted facts for both newspaper articles and a website. The requests are usually to contact a journalist with information at very short notice, which is not always easy when you have a busy caseload at work.

The CSP has also contacted me about three items, which may have featured in *Frontline* by the time you read this.

The press and public relations team at the CSP are updating their records and would like details of anyone willing to act as an expert spokesperson who would be happy to speak to journalists. They would like members from across the

country to register. Copies of the form are available directly from the Press Office at the CSP.

The Society is planning its contribution to BackCare Awareness Week (4–10 October 2008) and has requested our involvement. I am grateful to Judith Lee for agreeing to take the lead on this piece of work, which should raise our profile further.

The CSP is also planning to carry out an independent survey to find out what the general public understands about continence issues. It then plans to use the results to issue a press release promoting the role of physiotherapists in continence issues and will also produce a leaflet. This idea has come from the CSP and it has invited both ACPWH and the Chartered Physiotherapists Promoting Continence to be involved. At the time of writing, we are suggesting amendments to their questionnaire.

I have also contacted Channel 4 regarding a programme called *Embarrassing Bodies*, which suggested Botox as an initial treatment for urge incontinence. I commented that this was not a first-line treatment, which they acknowledged, and I also commented on the benefits of pelvic floor exercises. They responded that my comments would be passed to all Channel 4 programme-makers.

I have also attended an National Health Service (NHS) Workforce Review Meeting on behalf of the CSP. The meeting was primarily about future workforce requirements for obstetricians and midwives, and there was little to say about physiotherapy. However, I did have the chance outside the meeting to discuss specific women's health physiotherapy concerns with the meeting organizers.

I hope that my replacement will have been found and voted onto the executive committee by the time you read this: I only agreed to assume this post temporarily in order to fill the gap when no one was elected last year.

Ann Johnson

Education subcommittee report

The ESC continues to work hard on a variety of topics. The new musculoskeletal workshop is developing well, and we hope to launch it in 2009. Unfortunately, several of our existing workshops had to be cancelled this year because of a lack of attendees. We believe that this is partly a result of the current economic climate and NHS funding situation, but we will continue

to run workshops where demand makes it viable. The feedback from the Zoomerang questionnaire will help us to determine the future of our workshops. Many thanks go to the members who completed this online questionnaire.

The 'Pelvic Floor Examination and Assessment for Urinary Incontinence' workshop has been developed further, and we hope that the new programme will have been endorsed by the CSP by the time this report is published. We will review the benefits and effects of the endorsement process, and are planning to involve members in this review.

The University of Bradford's postgraduate programme has been revalidated for a further 5 years. The Association was involved in this process, and all students commencing their study from September 2008 will have to complete either the 'Continence for Physiotherapists' or 'Physiotherapy for Women's Health' postgraduate certificate to be eligible for membership of the ACPWH. Further details can be found in the education and award pages of this issue of the *Journal* (see pp. 101–104).

The ESC continues to update ACPWH leaflets in line with our regular review process, and we are also considering new leaflets based on members' requests.

We were pleased to launch the first 'call for papers' for our conference this year. It is hoped that this will prove to be a stimulating format for our Sixtieth Anniversary conference, and we are planning to make this a regular event.

Finally, we are looking forward to being able to give our commendation to the 'Pushy Mothers' fitness instructor's course. Their park-based postnatal exercise programme has previously been reviewed in the *Journal*, and was found to be excellent. Working in this collaborative way helps ACPWH to reach out to the general public in order to enhance the health of women in the community.

We welcome suggestions from members, and I look forward to meeting some of you at Conference this year.

Clair Jones

Archive group report

We have spent some interesting months locating material for the collection: it's quite amazing what has been found in lofts, garages, cellars and sometimes even under dining-room tables! Grateful thanks to all members who have contacted us.

A very exciting find was two hand-written letters by Helen Heardman from the late 1940s, plus a postnatal exercise leaflet from that time. In 1948, Helen Heardman was a founding member of the Obstetric Physiotherapy Association, later to be renamed the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Obstetrics and Gynaecology in 1976. Now in 2008, as ACPWH, we celebrate the Sixtieth Anniversary of what is now one of the oldest CSP clinical interest groups: a reason to be proud.

We had an excellent response from members following Conference 2007 in Preston regarding missing editions of the *Newsletter* and *Journal*. I am pleased to report that we now have two complete sets, from the very first *Newsletter* to the latest *Journal*. The Wellcome Library will hold one set, plus all other archival material, on permanent loan. This material will be accessible to anyone requiring research details or general information about the Association. The second set will be held at the Fitwise offices in Bathgate for easy access to information regarding *Journal* contents and articles.

Currently, the Archives Group is collecting full sets of minutes from executive committee and ESC meetings, plus details of educational courses, leaflets and conference programmes. These will also be held at the Wellcome Library and we are hoping to transfer all material there by the end of 2008.

Do let me know if you find anything during your decluttering sessions that may be of interest to the archive collection. Please contact me via e-mail (maynefam@aol.com).

Ann Mayne

Diversity officer's report

Since my last report, I have stepped down from this role – and then been asked to step back into it temporarily! No further issues have been forthcoming, but ACPWH continues to be proactive in ensuring equality for all members. The Association welcomes queries or suggestions from members on issues relating to diversity.

Clair Jones

Website monitor's report

The development of the ACPWH website has taken a back seat over the past couple of years as interactiveCSP has evolved, but our online presence has a unique role to play in communicating and providing information and resources to both

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the membership and others with an interest in women's health physiotherapy. Because it should also reflect members' needs and is increasingly being used as a source of information, it has now been revamped.

The navigation and layout of information within the website has been changed in order to make it more user-friendly and increase its efficiency. A great many more downloadable items relating to workshops, courses and various forms are now available, which means that the web user can easily print off required information directly from the website without needing to contact a member of the executive committee or Fitwise directly. Therefore, less time and money need to be spent by the executive or Fitwise, which is obviously of benefit to all.

The e-mail system by which you can contact the executive committee has also changed. The web user won't notice any changes, but the system has been made more efficient.

My role is to ensure that out-of-date information is removed and to provide a contact for any requested changes. Therefore, if you feel that something needs to be altered because it's not working for you, as web users, please do let me know. How could the website be better used? Is there anything else that would you like access to on the website? Does the navigation work well for you? All suggestions will be considered when these will be of benefit to ACPWH as a whole. Please do contact me at: gail.stephens@cambridgeshirepct.nhs.uk.

Gail Stephens